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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This case has been carefully reviewed and analyzed, and reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully requested.

ELECTION/RESTRICTIONS

Claims 8, 9 and 12 have been withdrawn from the claimed invention due to an election/restriction requirement.

CLAIM REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 2 and 11 were originally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention.

Responsive to this, claims 2 and 11 are amended according to the Examiner's instruction and suggestion. Therefore, it is believed that, by the amendments, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph should be removed.

CLAIM REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1, 2 and 10 were originally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eck (2,586,798) in view of Skolink (1,698,827).

In addition, claim 4 was originally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eck (2,586,798) in view of Skolink (1,698,827), and further in view of McCord (3,834,435).

However, the Examiner has pointed out that claims 3, 5-7 and 13 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office Action and if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Responsive to this, claim 3 is deleted, and claim 1 is amended which is substantially the combination of original claims 1 and 3 so as to make the claimed invention more distinguishably patentable over the prior art references cited by the Examiner.

In addition, claim 5 is amended to form an independent claim which is substantially the combination of original claims 1 and 5 so as to make the claimed invention more distinguishably patentable over the prior art references cited by the Examiner.

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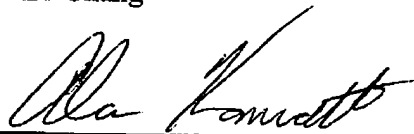
Further, claim 13 is amended to form an independent claim which is substantially the combination of original claims 1 and 13 so as to make the claimed invention more distinguishably patentable over the prior art references cited by the Examiner.

Accordingly, by the amendments, it is believed that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) should be withdrawn, and the claims 1, 2, 4-7, 10, 11 and 13 should be allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that the application is now in a condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. If any points remain in issue, which the Examiner feels could best be resolved by either a personal or a telephone interview, he is urged to contact Applicant's attorney at the exchange listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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